#12
BUSCEMA
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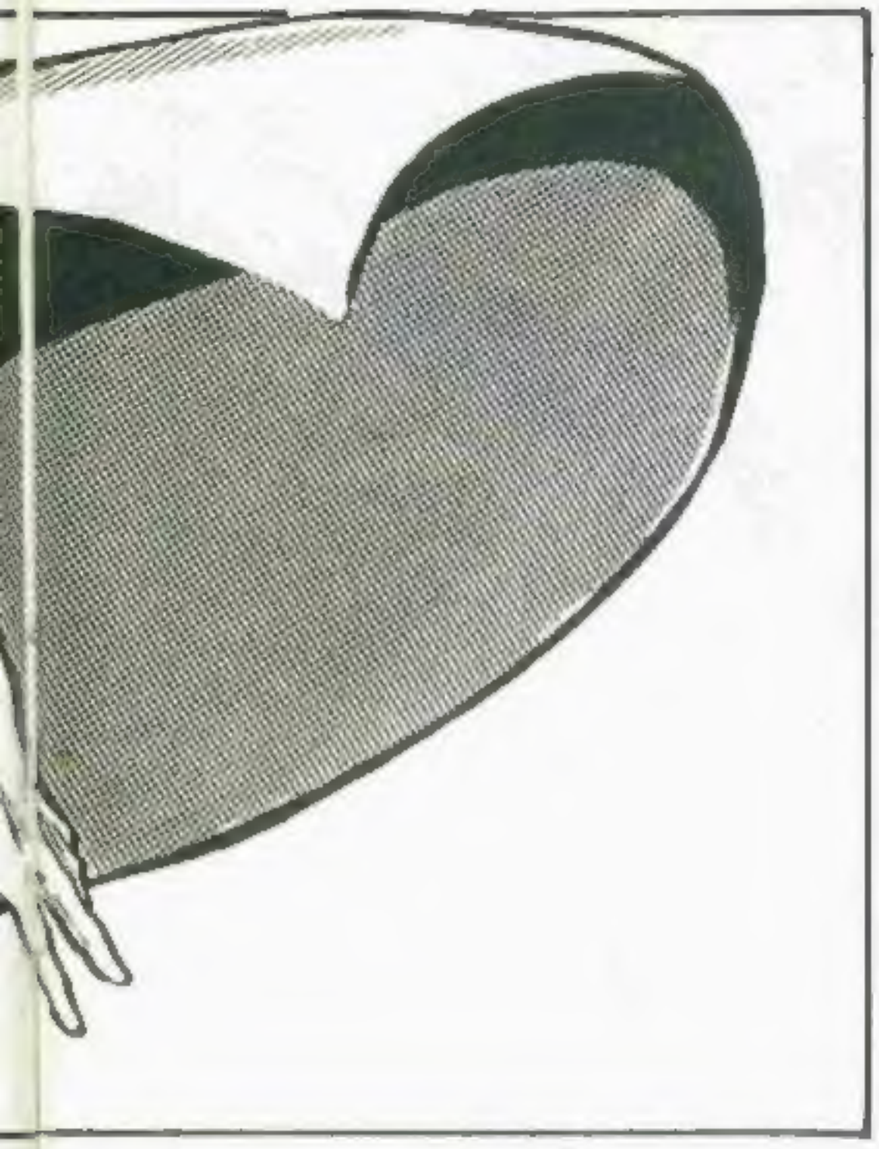

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VOICE: "I'm not only your partner, Vision . . in some strange way, I'm also . . your grandfather!"

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YJ: As you may know, the Vision's present existence is the indirect result of my robotics experiments. I built a robot who went out of control. It knocked me out, and proceeded to evolve itself into a more advanced state. That unfortunate creation of mine was to become one of our deadliest foes: Ultron! Ultron, though a machine, was quite like a human emotionally. He wanted a son. But he knew he couldn't trust any human, nor did he have any desire to; he had nothing but contempt for the human race. So he had the Vision made.

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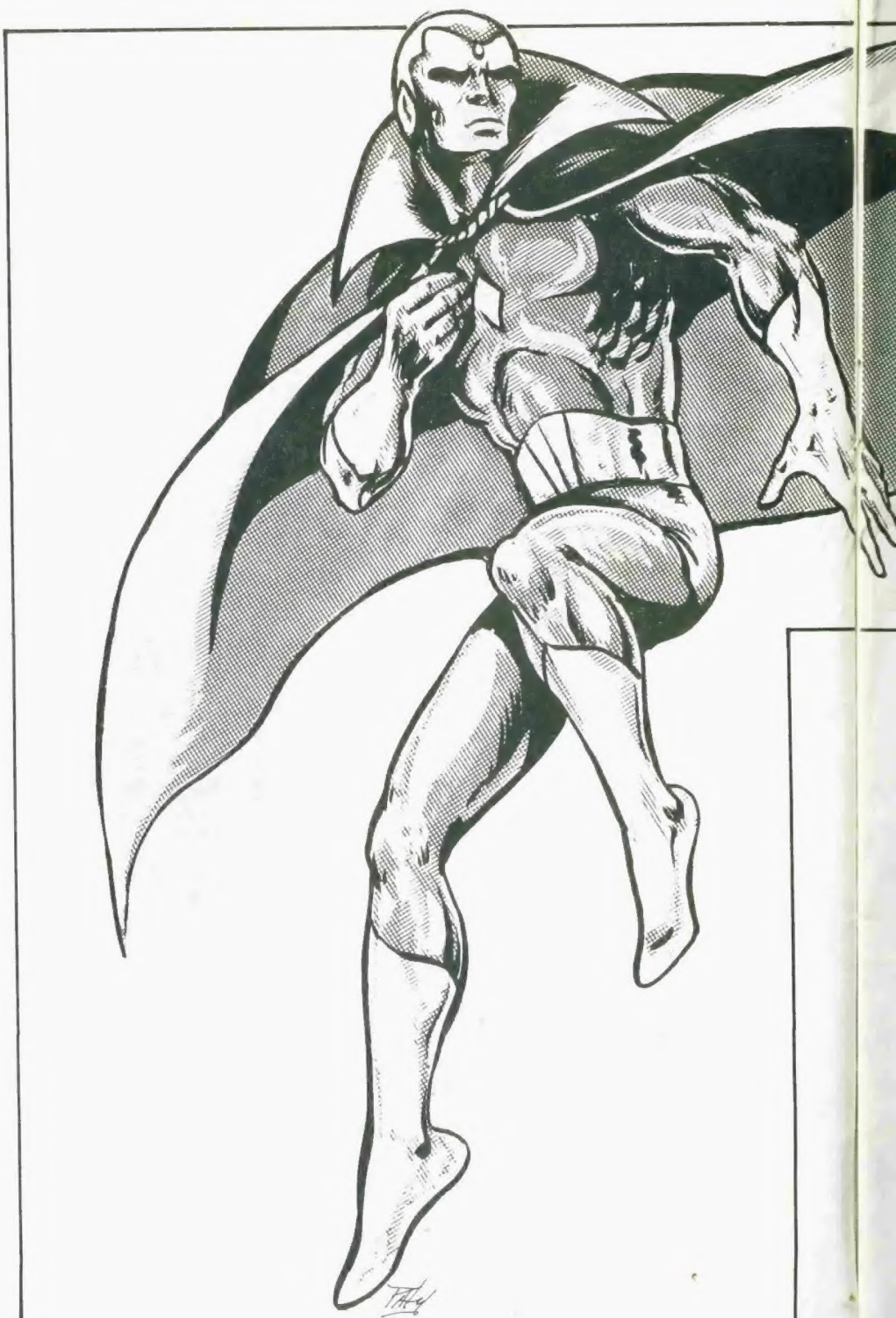

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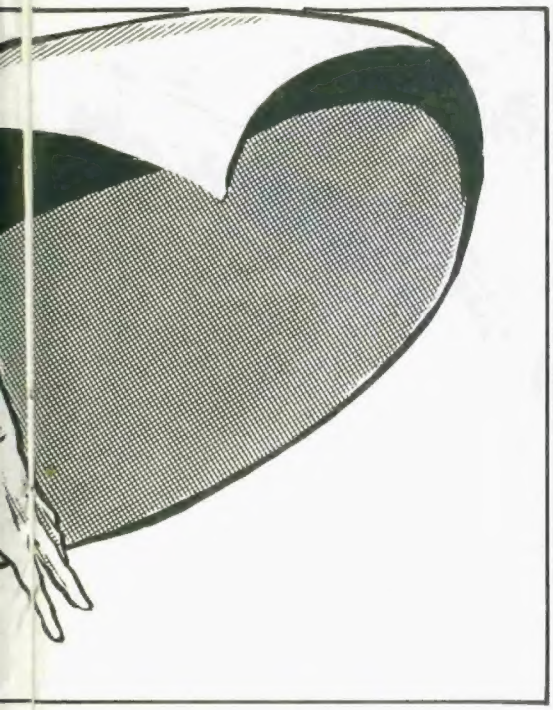

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FOOM: Thank you for those words, Thor.

This, then, is the story of the Vision's arrival at the gates of Avengerdom. But a few short months later, events were to transpire which would lead the Avengers to doubt the trust they placed in you . . . if only for a few short hours. Can you tell us about that?

VISION: Those were the darkest times of my life. Ultron had planted a command deep within the structure of my positronic brain, that, should be ever be destroyed, I would reconstruct him at the proper time. S.H.I.E.L.D. scientists had invented an alloy, adamantium, capable of withstanding the mightiest blows . . . even the combined power of Thor and Iron Man. I sneaked into the S.H.I.E.L.D. Heli-Carrier, under this horrible compulsion, and . . . oh, how it pains me to think about it . . . gave life to Ultron once more! But this time, just as before, I regained control of my faculties, and joined the Avengers to combat the newly-formed Ultron-6, as he rechristened himself. Unfortunately, I was injured, and forced to miss the battle in which the again-rebuilt (this time by himself) "Ultimate Ultron" was destroyed.

FOOM: The Avengers' confidence in you was restored then. The next few months were quiet ones . . . that is, if you can call an intergalactic contest involving Kang and the Grandmaster, and a battle with one of the many incarnations of that band of hate-mongers, the Sons of the Serpent, quiet. But, in the time that followed, an event involving the membership of the Avengers was to take place which has profoundly affected the course of your life from that moment on.

VISION: Oh? What was that?

WANDA: What was that?!? If I didn't know better . . .

VISION: A mere jest, my love. Of course, we are talking about your return to the Avengers. And it was an important event; somehow, I sensed even then that it would make a world of difference to me. Even then . . . and that was before I knew the meaning of love, come to think of it.

WANDA: Come to think of it, you couldn't even "come to think of it" until a few months ago, during the Kang War.

VISION: Yes, I was just standing around, and all of a sudden, these funny things started cycling through my positronic memory! The message I found most often went something like this: "Englehart was here."

But I digress. Yes, I met Wanda then. It was, along with my creation-day and our wedding-day, one of the most important days of my life.

FOOM: But the road to your happiness, Vision and Wanda, was not smooth. First, there was an obstacle

at home. . .a family obstacle, in fact. Do you know this voice?

VOICE: "Wanda, I'll never speak to you again. . .not while you love that android! Not if your so-called love-life includes the Vision! You may think it civilized to consort with a machine—but I do not—and no true sister of mine would feel differently!"

WANDA: My brother, Pietro Quicksilver! Those are the words he spoke to me when last we met. How did you get that statement of his? Did he come here to taunt us?

FOOM: No, Wanda; that was a tape from the Avengers Mansion video-monitor. But the protests of your brother were not the only stumbling-blocks in your paths: there was also the competition and flirtation of Mantis.

WANDA: Ah, the so-called "Celestial Madonna"! Fortunately, her marriage to one of the Cotati plant-people and her ascent to a higher state removed her as a problem. But she was quite annoying

FOOM: But you both survived it all and now you stand here before me, as perhaps the most unusual married couple in history.

If the path to your emotional happiness was not at all clear, the physical side of your life was no picnic either. I remember a time, for example, Vision, when you were injured, and a most unusual form of surgery was performed.

VOICE: "Ant-Man entered the Vision and repaired him from the inside. Recently, the Vision was able to return the favor. But the Vision almost entered my body once. . .for keeps!"

FOOM: Well put, Cap. I'm sure you all recognize Captain America; what were you referring to, Cap, when you said that the Vision once almost occupied you?

C.A.: Another arch-foe of ours, the Grim Reaper, tried to convince the Vision that if he were to betray us, the Reaper would give him a new body. The Reaper offered the Vision a body which would, most likely, have some significance to him: that of Wonder Man. Wonder Man was the Reaper's brother, and he falsely held the Avengers responsible for his brother's death. So he tried to entice the Vision, who was once more experiencing doubts about his humanity, with a flesh-and-blood body. Wonder Man's body was long dead, though; the Reaper (and his silent partner, the Space Phantom) intended to trick the Vision into taking my body as a substitute. As a protective measure, they'd captured all the other Avengers as well. After long resistance, the Vision "agreed" to the arrangement;

he then waited, in his cool way, for the unholy duo to get careless. And, as always with their type, they slipped up.

FOOM: Thank you, Cap. Vision, I'd like to talk now about a particularly painful time of your life. It was shortly after your interest in Wanda became public knowledge. Do you know what I'm speaking of?

VISION: Yes, certainly . . . the "Living Bombs" business. It was unimportant in the largest sense: no large-scale movement, they were just a small group of ill, hateful people running around with bombs strapped to their bodies, endangering the public to feed their own sick, suicidal hatreds. It never ceases to amaze me, though, how helpful not only friends, but strangers can be in the face of horrors like the Bombs. Our mail was overwhelmingly favorable. The general public reaction was quite a help.

FOOM: We've already said that you've not told your complete origin. We're told by our reporters that the full secret of your "birth" was revealed to you just recently. To begin with, most of our viewers don't know that you were not just any android, but that . . .

VOICE: "Before the Vision was the Vision . . . he was the original Human Torch!"

FOOM: That, as you know, is the voice of Reed Richards, Mr. Fantastic of the Fantastic Four, here today to share this day with you and the Avengers. Mr. Fantastic, how is it that the original Torch survived until today?

MR. F.: In the late 50's or so, the Vision and the original Torch told us, the Torch fell prey to radiation sickness and went nova, burning out his artificial life in a blaze of glory. In the mid-60's, his body was recovered by the F.F.'s old foe, the Mad Thinker, the master of androids. The Thinker brainwashed the Torch and used him as a weapon against us; but he broke his conditioning and sided with us, and burned out once more, this time in order to help defeat the Thinker. His body was commandeered from the Thinker's head-quarters by Ultron, who, as the Vision has told us, found Professor Horton, the original Torch's creator, working as a TV repairman. He forced him to rebuild the Torch into an android which would serve him. He colored his skin red so as to be a constant reminder to Ultron of this android's origins . . . to point out the irony of one of the greatest heroes of a bygone age aiding the greatest menace mankind has known!

But the Torch (who now looked like the Vision) rebelled; Ultron then decided that his memory-patterns were too strong for the Torch-Vision to be loyal to Ultron. So he erased his memory, giving him the mind-patterns of the late Wonder Man.

Is that correct, Vision?

VISION: Perfect, Richards.

MR. F.: That's all of it, then; the rest, you've already spoken about.

FOOM: Vision, did you have any indication ever that the truth about your origin was not unfolded completely to you? I mean, did you ever have any inkling of being from another age, or being another person?

VISION: I had experienced two attacks of fear of water and of closed-in spaces in recent months, both of which baffled me. I know now that the

reason for these is the fact that the Torch was imprisoned, first in a swimming pool filled with concrete, then underwater, then under the desert.

Also, I recall the Sentinels saying something to the effect that I was an android of three decades' vintage. The Torch was built over three decades ago...

FOOM: Since your wedding, Vision and Wanda, have you noticed any differences in the way people react to you?

VISION: Not much, really. Those who hated us and feared us before the ceremony continue to, and our supporters still uphold us.

WANDA: If there's been any change in our lives recently, they've been the changes brought about by my studies of witchcraft.

FOOM: I always thought your "witchcraft" was the result of your mutation.

WANDA: No longer. I underwent training in the true Craft.

FOOM: Vision, what is it like living with a witch?

VISION: Actually, I have no basis of comparison. I don't know what it's like living with anyone else!

FOOM: Well, we're nearing the end of our program, Vision, and we'd like to thank you and tell you how pleased we are to bring your story to the folks out there, and we'd like to give you these few gifts as token of our esteem. We have put together an album, filled with details of the noteworthy events in your life which we've spoken about today. We'd also like to present you with this gift from our sponsors: a case of Impervious Margarine! Well, I'd like to thank you agai...Vision! Where are you going? We're not quite finished yet

(Editor's Note: Here, the taping degenerates into a free-for-all. The Vision leaves Avengers Mansion through the wall and Wanda is heard to say something about "fooling Mother Nature." It is obvious to this armadillo why this film has never been released: but, it must be studied for factual content. I submit this as my final report on the matter of the Vision.)

—RK

THE SCARLET WITCH

by Dave Kraft

Meditations on a Ms.

I am not Steve Englehart.

And I have never, in point of fact, had anything to do with writing the Scarlet Witch. That undoubtedly accounts in part for the reason why I was asked to do a couple hundred words on her as a character—to provide balance, since I am not subjectively involved with her or the Vision on a creative basis.

Yet I *am* subjectively involved, in another way.

My awareness of the Scarlet Witch dates back to her sporadic appearances as a villainess, generally in company with her brother, Pietro, and Magneto's band of evil mutants. I never paid much attention to her, though; there even remains a faint residue of the vague dislike which I felt toward the two costumed siblings 'til well after their eventual assimilation into the Avengers. Why I reacted negatively to them is no longer part of my memory, but it may have had something to do with their original status as evil mutants.

Anyway, I took my first real notice of the Scarlet Witch in AVENGERS #16, when the new roster containing her became an actuality. Gradually, my feelings toward her changed, and with time her presence in the Avengers—despite occasional short-lived absences—assumed a reassuring if often overlooked importance. From time to time she exercised her hex power as a diversion, usually when the other Avengers were at a temporary loss, but mostly she went unnoticed in the greater tapestry of the storyline.

She even endured a long-running though essentially unexplored romantic entanglement involving herself, Hawkeye, and Hercules—a relationship which revealed more about them than it did about her. It is only since her liason with the Vision, culminating in their recent marriage, and also since her exposure to and subsequent training in real witchcraft, that the Scarlet Witch has been much in the limelight. Thanks mostly to Stainless Steve, she's once again being impressed on my consciousness in a direct way, rather than merely being taken for granted.

Operating on the assumption that what's true for me must also be true for a sizeable number of other readers, these informal observations probably come as no great revelation.

However, it was as I sat in Schrafft's facing Jaunty Jim Salicrup over dessert, while simultaneously trying to get an angle on this article, that I came to a most abrupt realization. Namely, that despite my acquaintance with the Scarlet Witch over lo! these many years, I scarcely know her; she's still primarily an enigma to me.

After all, what do any of us really know about the Scarlet Witch?

Only the bare details of her character, if I may boldly answer my own rhetorical question. Perhaps that's what irritated me about the Scarlet Witch in the first place—her removed, seemingly aloof nature that reveals little of herself beyond the obvious motivation conveyed by her dialogue and actions. It was this absence of definitive "open" insight that, without ever really realizing it, I had unconsciously reacted against.

Truth to tell, I'd never gotten past the superficial to understand her character for what it is. The obvious can occasionally prove maddeningly elusive and, as they say in whodunit stories, I should have known.

The Scarlet Witch is an introvert.

My exercise in inference next lead me to the inevitable question—*why?* The answer to that is much easier. The mere possession of mutant abilities would affect a child in drastic fashion, and must certainly have served to turn young Wanda's thoughts inward, creating in her a contained intensity and a strong self-sufficiency, even as it brought those qualities and a frustrated bitterness to her brother.

As if that weren't enough, the mutant Ms. went on to the study of real witchcraft. *My* first exposure to real witchcraft came with my position as editor of a metaphysical journal which, at times, featured genuine articles on the occult. One of these detailed ritual proceedings and outlined requirements for the serious scholar of the art, and from it I know that the study and practice of witchcraft and magick requires severe discipline.

Wanda's mastery of it indicates an endurance and determination of character that runs deeper than is at once apparent, and her efforts to transcend her mutant power, rather than relying on it exclusively, prove that she is no weak-willed female stereotype.

Rather than being sharply characterized in a few brief issues, it is only if the total of her appearances in the X-MEN and the AVENGERS are taken as a tremendous and lengthy novel that her evolution and development can be appreciated and that all the complexities of her introverted nature emerge to the discerning eye.

Which is, I guess, in a roundabout way, intimating that I have a discerning eye. Forgive me such a pretense, however illusionary; these are merely myopic meditations intended to stir some thought and shed some insight on an oft-overlooked subject.

As I stated at the outset, while I have absolutely nothing to do with chronicling the ongoing exploits of the Scarlet Witch, I could not possibly affect an objective stance when it came to discussing her as a character. I have been reading the AVENGERS far too long for that. So I'm hoping these assorted personal observations have sufficed in lieu of a pedantic and boring monologue on the significance of any slight variations in the costume of the Scarlet Witch, or some similar treatise.

And, anyway, it's all over already. Quick, painless, and no more than the few hundred words I promised to provide for a balanced insight.

Take care, and stay aware!

—DAK

Introducing...

mighty marvel mini-items

Let's start off with a small quiz, shall we?

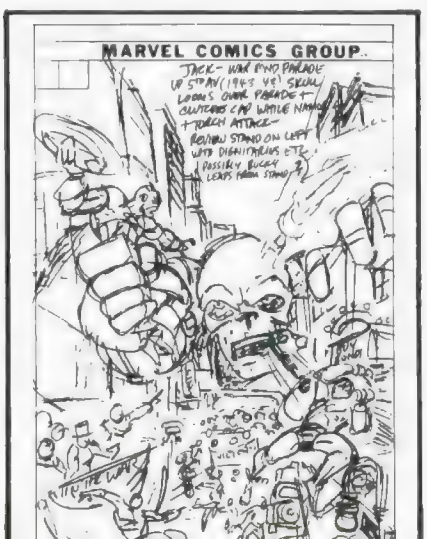
which witch is which?

Anyone reading this particular issue of FOOM should be, by now, well aware of our mystical Ms., the Scarlet Witch. But, what about these other dwellers in the Dark Arts? The first Foomer to correctly identify all eight witches will be officially no-prized and named as our wicked winner next issue in this column. Send all entries to Foom's Mini-Items, Marvel Comics Group, 575 Madison Ave., New York, New York 10022.

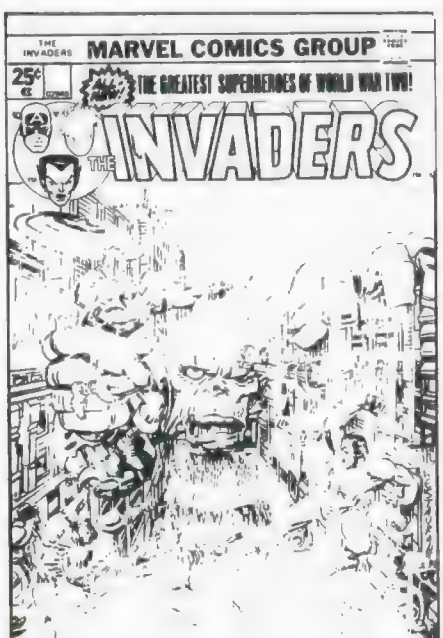
behind the scenes

BEHIND THE SCENES: A peek at how the cover for INVADERS #5 was created.

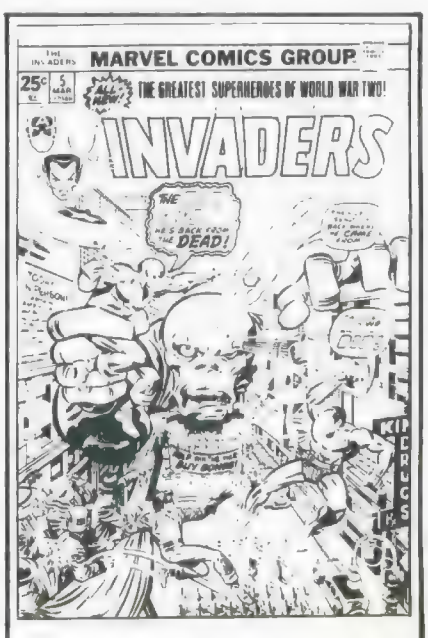
STEP ONE: Marvel's Art Director John Romita, along with Writer/Editor Roy Thomas, briefed artist Ed Hannigan on the editorial contents of Invaders #5. Ed returned with the pencil sketch reproduced below. Reaction was quite favorable. (Note John Romita's suggestions to Jack Kirby.)



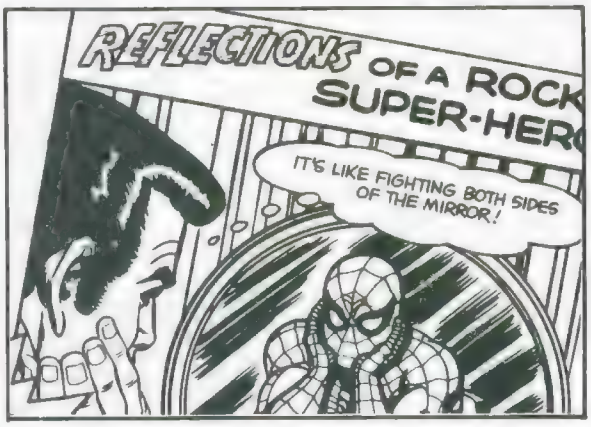
STEP TWO: Both John and Roy decided Jack Kirby would be the perfect choice to render this cover, considering Jack's great work on Captain America and the Red Skull over the years.



STEP THREE: Joe Sinnott was the obvious choice to add his own illustrative style to Jack's fantastic pencils. And the final copy (dialogue) was added by Roy Thomas.



rock on marvelites, everywhere!



Now that Mighty Marvel has established itself in the rock world with the release of Spidey's latest and greatest album— "Reflections of a Rock Super-hero" everyone is in on the Marvel Explosion! For example, on the latest Paul McCartney and Wings album ("Venus and Mars") three of Marvel's mightiest metal baddies are included in the rocker entitled "Magneto and Titanium Man" (The Crimson Dynamo didn't make it into the title, folks. Awwww)! Meanwhile, another Paul, Paul Simon (of Simon and Garfunkel fame) has released his latest LP ("Still Crazy After All These Years") which includes this chorus from "50 Ways to Leave Your Lover": "You just slip out the back, Jack/Make a new plan, Stan/You don't need to be coy, Roy/Just get yourself free/Hop on the bus, Gus?! And if that's not enough to satisfy you, rockster, Rick Wakeman gallavants through Ken ('Tommy') Russell's new film 'Lisztomania' as a symbolic take-off on the perfect-soldier concept garbed as Marvel's own Asgardian Thweetheart, Thor, the God of Thunder. But wait, there's still more. Rock Super-star David Bowie's wife is hoping to portray the one-and-only deadly Black Widow. Negotiations are underway for a Black Widow television special, and possibly, series. Angie, a long-time fan of Stan Lee, sez 'Stan's conception of the Black Widow will be important. Marvel is going to be totally involved. That may mean a lot of work for them, but the result will be well worth it," 'Nuff said.

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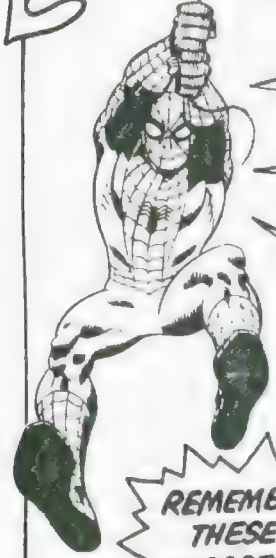

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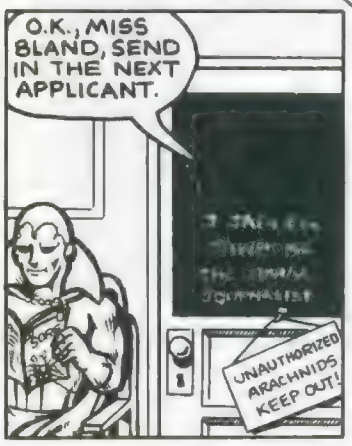
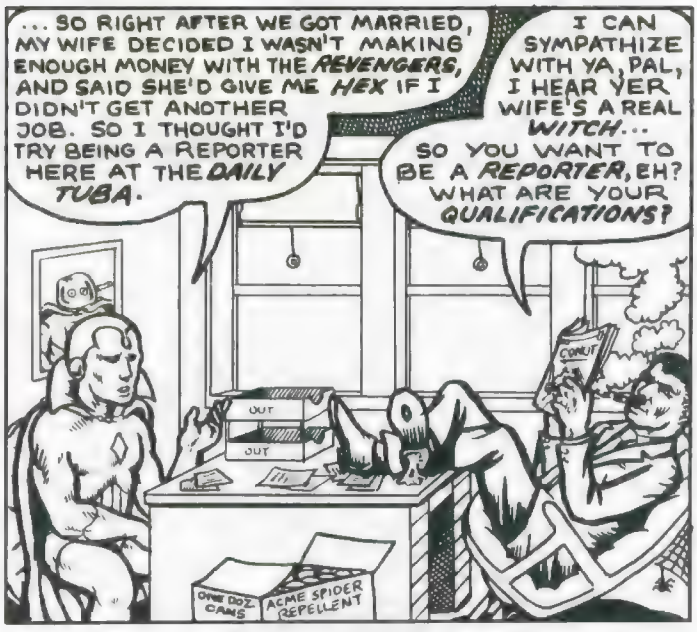
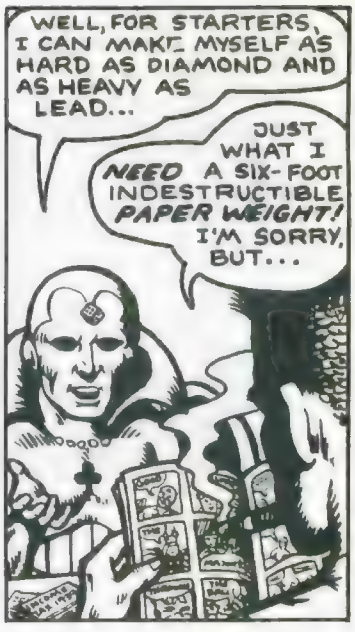
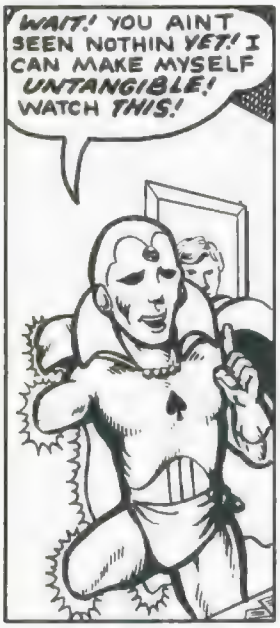
DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL, WE NOW PRESENT: **THE VISAGE**

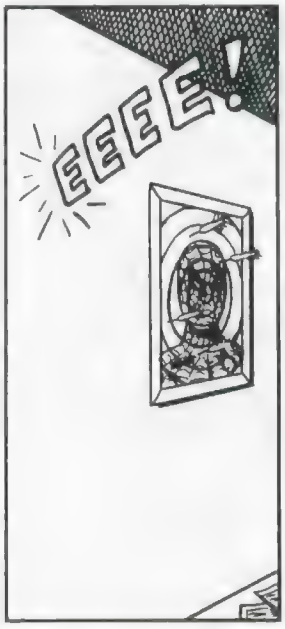
BY *CHARLEY PARKER*

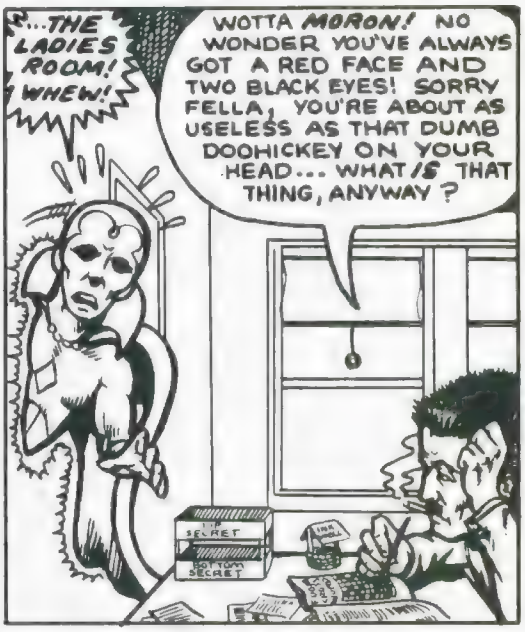



... SO RIGHT AFTER WE GOT MARRIED, MY WIFE DECIDED I WASN'T MAKING ENOUGH MONEY WITH THE *REVENGERS*, AND SAID SHE'D GIVE ME *HEX* IF I DIDN'T GET ANOTHER JOB. SO I THOUGHT I'D TRY BEING A REPORTER HERE AT THE *DAILY TUBA*.
I CAN SYMPATHIZE WITH YA, PAL, I HEAR YER WIFE'S A REAL *WITCH*...
SO YOU WANT TO BE A *REPORTER*, EH? WHAT ARE YOUR *QUALIFICATIONS*?
OUT
OUT
DONUT
ONE DOZ CANS
ACME SPIDER REPELLENT


WELL, FOR STARTERS, I CAN MAKE MYSELF AS HARD AS DIAMOND AND AS HEAVY AS LEAD...
JUST WHAT I *NEED* A SIX-FOOT INDESTRUCTIBLE *PAPER WEIGHT!* I'M SORRY, BUT...






...THE LADIES ROOM! WHEW!
WOTTA *MORON!* NO WONDER YOU'VE ALWAYS GOT A RED FACE AND TWO BLACK EYES! SORRY FELLA, YOU'RE ABOUT AS USELESS AS THAT DUMB DOOHICKEY ON YOUR HEAD... WHAT *IS* THAT THING, ANYWAY?
SECRET
SECRET

SHEESH! I KNEW OLD J.J. WAS *CHEAP*, BUT THIS IS *RIDICULOUS!*
OH WELL, IT'S NOT TOO BAD. I GET WEEKENDS AND CLOUDY DAYS OFF.
HIGH VOLTAGE
DAILY TUBA BLDG. POWER SUPPLY
NO CRAWLING ON THIS WALL!
AND WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED THERE, YOU CAN GO DOWN AND CHARGE THE BATTERY ON MY CAR.
I WONDER IF CON ED STARTED THIS WAY.

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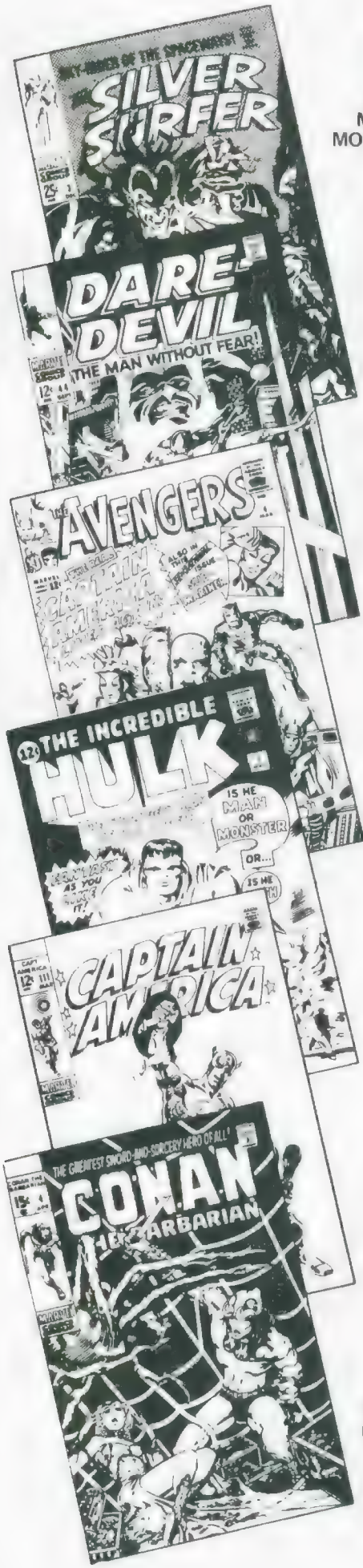

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You got questions?

We got answers.

You wanna make a few suggestions as to what we should do in FOOM?

We're willing to listen to ya.

So send us your letters... but make 'em a challenge to us. Y'know, something a little more than telling us how much you *love* each issue of FOOM. We wanna know why you love us and what we could do to make you love us even more. Okay?

So now, on to the letters....

Dear FOOM People:

My opinion of FOOM #11 can be summed up in one word. Great!!! I loved every word, from Scott's editorial, to the inFOOMation section, to the back cover, to the front cover to Scott's editorial, to the inFOOMation page....(if this sounds like praise, you're right!!) Who does the FOOM interviews? Irv? Or do you have a special armadillo? I hadn't seen a recent picture of Jack in a while, so it was well appreciated. The 2001 art was beautiful! My compliments to Jack. The letters from other FOOMers were extremely scintilating. How can I get my hands on some of your British editions? The Irv's were O.K., but the format has to go! I couldn't make heads or tales (sic) of them. The article by Dave Simons was all right, but it didn't tell me anything I didn't already know. Was that the High Evolutionary in panel 7 on page 25? The artwork was good, but the Hulk sounded too moronic. The inFOOMation page was the most comprehensive yet. Can you guys do something about distribution up here? We don't get half the comics, and when we do, they are two weeks late!

Two more questions—Omega and Silver Surfer!! When, where, and who?

By the way, thanks for sending me 6 issues (so far) of FOOM for $2.00! Tell me when you're going to stop sending issues, so I can resubscribe—I don't want to miss an issue!

'Till Hulkie turns pansy,

Christopher Small
122 Edgehill Rd.
Syracuse, New York
Foom #10688012007

P.S. Who in Forbushland is this Paty person? I'm tearing my hair trying to figure it out!!!!!!

Why do we get the vague feeling that you liked FOOM #11? Must be somethin' you said. The interviews are indeed done by our very own special armadillos. We just give them a teeny-weeny little tape-recorder and set them loose in the Bullpen until they get a whole buncha people down on tape. But seriously, Chris, the interview with King Kirby in FOOM #11 was conducted by none other than Scott Edelman. Nope, that wasn't the High Evolutionary in that story on page 25... that was our dear old Uncle Ralph out for a night on the town without Aunt Shirley. The Hulk just happened to get in the way of things. Omega and Silver Surfer... just keep yer hat on and your baby blues glued to these pages (not ta mention the Bullpen pages in every ish of our color comics) and you'll see! Boy, will you be glad you waited!

P.S. to your P.S. You can stop plucking out your golden tresses, Christopher, 'cause we'll tell ya who Paty is. She's the multi-talented young lady who works in the Courageous Corrections Department up here and who draws on the side. (She'll draw on the side of anything... a barn, a duck, a kumquat... *anything*!!)

Dear Scott and Duffy,

This is my first letter to FOOM although I have been getting it since #8.

FOOM #10 was very good except that you didn't give any specifics on the new X-MEN. It's impossible to get their new mag out here so a few details would have gone down well. Instead, you just whetted my appetite and made me even more curious than ever.

As for the Department of InFOOMation, I like the new system with the interview style.

The photos in #10 of Marvel at the convention were much appreciated. It's always good to know who's behind all the myriad Marvelmania and the like. It's good to have a scorecard to tell all the players with.

I also approve of the center spread you have in every issue. The Don Maitz X-MEN was especially nice, but I wish that you guys could get Havoc into the new group. That would, I think, make them perfect. (By the way, could you tell me what powers the Wolverine has? I haven't been able to figure 'em out yet.)

You said in FOOM #9 that you wanted questions to ask the writers for the news section. Well, find out from Doug Moench if he will be bringing Pat Savage back into the DOC SAVAGE magazine.

Well, that's all for now. Keep up the good work and EXCELSIOR!

'Rascally' Roy Leyland
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Why'd you wait so long, Roy? (Hmm. That name sounds vaguely familiar....) Opinion seems to be running about 50-50 (what can we tell you... we've got a lotta really *weird* readers!) on the new (except now it's the old, 'cause we went back to the original style) Department of InFOOMation. Let's hear from you people out there on the way you want it, okay? And guess what? You get your wish because Havoc *will* be joining the X-MEN very soon. (At least the book, tho' not *necessarily* the group...) Watch for it. As for the Wolverine, he's got a whole buncha powers... like he's fast, extremely agile, a super-contortionist type and is virtually indestructable. (Plus he makes a really mean Western omelette!)

Dear F-Men (Foom Men)

This is my first time writing to Foom magazine in particular. I've written often to color comics and some to the Black & Whites but I feel that Foom is slacking in its presentation. That's the reason I'm writing.

Since I consider you the best of all comic companies, your writing styles, freedoms, etc., and the persons who originated the first Fanzine to their own comics group, I'd like to suggest some..er..suggestions!

Beautiful cover by Dave Cockrum on #10. An excellent opening to what would be inside. You know...the guts!

"Mutations of the Species" was informative and indeed pretty good. But it was carried out too long and made less room for other things.

Drawings, like the original one of the Sentinels by Kirby, covers that had not been used and nostalgic items interest me. Let's see Marvel when it was younger as well as now. Maybe some long time Bullpenners own pictures or original pictures of characters. John Romita, I figure, does drawings of features and such for new heroes. Let's see some. The art of Storm as done by Cockrum again was needed. The Marie Severin comedy cartoons are super. The jokes of hanging, blowing up, or whippings of some people such as "Chris Claremont, Len Wein, Dave Cockrum" are a specialty and uniqueness Marvel has. ((?))

The cartoons of Doctor Foom are fun but you should limit them to one per issue. I especially liked the one with Captain Applepie. They're entertaining and cheerful. When you're "down and out"...go to Marvel!

The Foom Fan Art Gallery is definitely "in" with me. Possibly some of these guys will be working for Marvel Comics...just like me...well..er...I hope! Still I was wondering what kind of paper or materials would be convenient to use on presentations? Ink or Flair? Plain Pencil? Bristol Board? Size? (I've enclosed an S.A.S.E. since Scott Edelman and Duffy Vohland don't look like they're doing anything...Please I need a response if I want to see anything printed...)

The Poster Pull-out isn't necessary. Since I don't destroy my collectables by tearing things out, this wasn't needed by me. I thought the cover was better if anybody wanted to wreck their Foom mag.

Without pictures from the MarvelCon it might not have been worth it all that much. I attended the Con and found all the Bullpenners, who I'd seen, enjoyable. The Con was great! Hope there is another!

Contests and such are "in" again for me. "Draw this Page" and "Write this Page" and stuff like that are perfect. We can really get into a Marvel spirit.

To end the mag are next issue offerings which fits in just right.

Ah but the "InFOOMation," I feel, should be updated as possible because, again, the fanzines usually give us the most up-to-date info.

A vote of yes for a letters page again.

A vote of yes to expand the mag.

Righto and Live Large!

Michael Biegel
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Thanks for the kind words, Michael, and we'll definitely take your suggestions under consideration. Like we say again and again (and ain't you tired of hearin' it all ready!) we want to hear from you, tellin' us what you want to see. The best materials to use in doing comic art is some type of relatively sturdy Bristol-board (available in most art supply stores), any type of pencil that you feel suits your style and likes, and India Ink. These (plus an eraser, naturally) are all you need to draw... plus a whole lotta practice. By the way, Scott and Duffy said they'd answer you personally if they weren't so busy with some little office chores... like Scott with his proofreading and writing, and Duffy with his editing seven British books a week plus inking. Glad you liked the Photo-feature on the Con as well as the Con itself... so we're bettin' that you can hardly wait for the Second Annual Mighty Marvel Convention comin' your way real soon now.

Steve Englehart Speaks!

Part 1

"Journey to the Center of a Vision"

SE: Hello.
FOOM: Steve? FOOM here.
SE: Hi.
FOOM: Have you been thinking about the Vision for this interview since I last spoke to you?
SE: To an extent. Scott talked to me about this last summer and I thought about it then. It hasn't been at the top of my mind but I have given it some thought.
FOOM: Right. That's basically what I wanted. Your thoughts on the Vision off the top of your head. What did you think when you first took over the book?
SE: Well, when I first took over the Avengers ...I've said this before and I'll say it again... that Roy Thomas' AVENGERS were among *the* best comics that have ever been done. I thought, as a reader, that Roy's AVENGERS were just incredibly top rate. Again, it wasn't just *Roy's* AVENGERS because there was Buscema and Adams and Buckler and people like that which have not graced THE AVENGERS pages in my day. I thought, just in general, it had really come together and I thought, Wow! When Roy asked me to take it over I was, at the same time, really happy about it because I really loved the strip and I was also new enough at comics not to really *know*...I had a lot of enthusiasm but I really didn't have the knowledge of how difficult it would be to follow in Roy's footsteps. I had a lot of confidence in myself and I figured I could do it. What I tried to do then was like Roy's AVENGERS and I did that for about a year and a half. And it took me like that year and a half to discover that I wasn't Roy, that what I should be doing is Englehart's AVENGERS so I finally started pulling it in that direction about the middle of the Mantis story. It was started in a whole different way than it ended. By the middle of it I realized Gee, I'm trying to do Roy's strip here but I don't approach a book the way Roy does, I approach it from the basis of the characters and how they face the menace, whereas Roy approaches from the aspect of what's a good menace and once I got a story then I'll add characterization. So we're coming at it from a 180° apart and trying to do it on Roy's basis... there were ups and downs but I generally was not entirely satisfied with the way the Avengers were going. That's basically why I gave up THE DEFENDERS of the two because I thought, myself, that I had done a real good job on THE DEFENDERS. I'd liked what I had done with it and I thought okay, since I only want to do one group book I would rather stick with the one that I just don't feel that I've gotten up to my standards yet. So I dropped THE DEFENDERS and kept THE AVENGERS, and I know at the time lots of people said, why'd you do that? The point was that I wanted to concentrate on it and I feel real good about the Avengers now. I really feel like I found what I was trying to find with that, which was how to do an Englehart AVENGERS. As far as the Vision goes... the Vision was created, as far as I could determine from talking with Roy, to be Marvel's Mr. Spock. He was going to be the mysterious guy that everybody fell in love with... you can ask Paty, she'll testify to this... The sort of untouchable but super man. You know, the guy that everybody wants because he's so unapproachable. And he was an excellent character under that conception. It was Roy's character and Roy's handling at that time and then Roy started that trip of Wanda and the Vision together. He started it and then he got off the book and I was left with it and that was one of the things that really stymied me. I didn't know where to go with it. I was trying to go where he was going but there was really no place to go with it. Except... well, I could have done Steve Rogers and Sharon Carter for the next twenty years where they sort of came and went, but I didn't want to do that because I had already gotten rid of the Steve Rogers Sharon Carter thing by the time I took over Captain America and I was well on the way to defining their relationships, with the one-armed vet (?) coming and going. He would have stayed if I had stayed but I wrote him out in

the last issue to give anybody who came after the chance to do whatever they wanted. But the point being that I've always thought the Clark Kent-Lois Lane type relationship might work for them, but Marvel comics are supposed to progress and things are supposed to happen. So, it finally occured to me, and I hate to say now how long it took me to really understand some of these characters I was working with, that if the Vision was in love with Wanda then he was not Mr. Spock, as Mr. Spock doesn't fall in love. What we had here was a Mr. Spock who wanted to be Captain Kirk, to follow that analogy. He wanted to be human and he wanted to be in love with her and he wanted to have feelings. That came as a great revelation to me and if it was going to progress, he had to get off the dime as far as his relationship with Wanda was concerned and the reason he wasn't going anywhere is because he was supposed to be Mr. Spock. When it finally occured to me that he wasn't, then I could do something with him. So I did. The way I look at him now is that he is, despite having human brain patterns, still a computer mind. He still has an ice cold voice, he still has a very logical approach to things from his Spock heritage. But at the same time he wants to be more human. It's not like the Tin Woodsman who goes around crying, "Oh gosh, if I could just have a heart everything would be fine." The Vision's more together than that but he wants to be more human without necessarily giving up anything he all ready is. He just wants to try to develop that side of his personality which the computer mind doesn't give him a whole lot of.

FOOM: On that wanting to be human aspect of the character, I would thing, and this is going back to some things you said in several letter columns, that he would want to have kids.

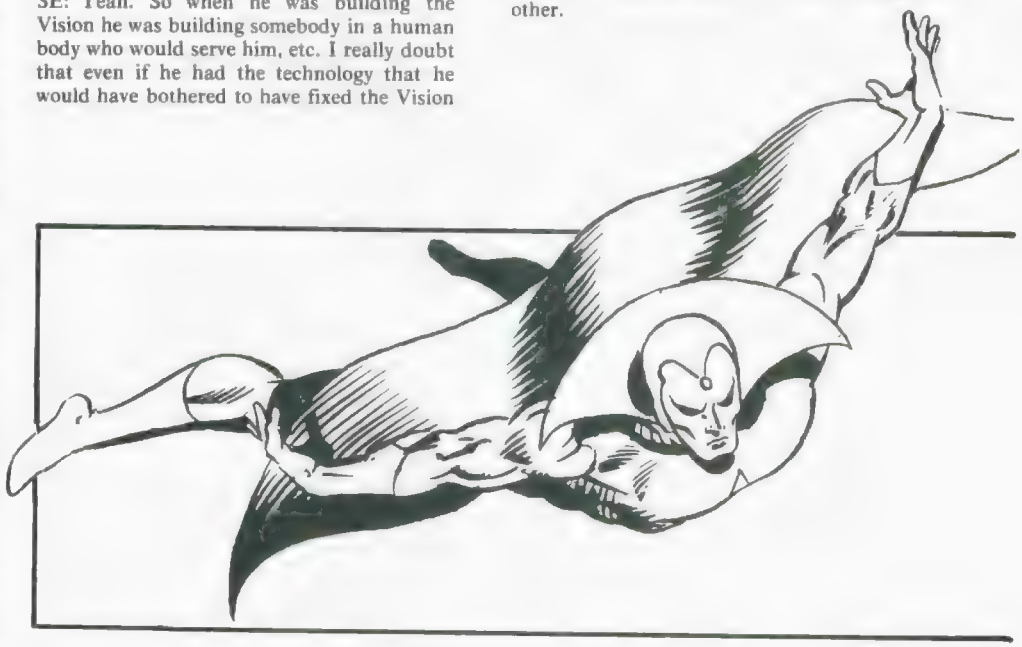
SE: That was exactly my idea, as a matter of fact. I kind of thought that he would and I didn't, being a male, necessarily think through Wanda's trip entirely. I'd have to say that I think I do a pretty good job on women generally but I didn't really... well, thinking through wanting to have a baby isn't something that's been part of my experience, but now that I'm married my wife and I have discussed it, etc., but the thing with Wanda and the Vision goes back to before I was married. But Paty made a good argument somewhere that Wanda was not at all interested in being a mother, which, once it was explained to me, I saw immediately and I said sure. My original idea was that they would adopt a kid. I thought that would be a nice, bizarre development in their relationship. But I think it is true that Wanda would not be so interested in it as, given that point... it's always been my opinion that the Vision could not be a natural father. I had played with the idea and rejected it as being impossible to explain in a code approved comic book... that the Vision could drop around to his local sperm bank and pick up a liter of stuff. But you could never explain that in comics and since that solution was therefore denied me entirely, the adoption thing seemed logical until I came to realize that Wanda wouldn't necessarily go for it.

FOOM: What I thought on the terms of the sperm bank thing was that when Ultron created him he created him fully operational. In which case he would have had to get the sperm supply from either Hank Pym or Jarvis or... That could arise into some interesting things if it were Hank, but what could you get away with in terms of the Code.

SE: Yeah. So the sperm bank idea was just out from the start. The more I thought about, a writer, as I've often said, particularly when I was working with Tuska, is supposed to make everything make sense. It's like you've got Point A and Point B and you've got to figure out a way to get from one to the other that will make sense. You've got to be able to read it and think that it's progression and nobody thinks well, you think of the beginning and then the end and then a way to get there. Always a challenge. But, given any two points you can find some way to get between them and thus, given the idea that they were not going to have kids it became very logical to me that Ultron-5 would not have endowed the Vision, as I said in the letters page. There are reasons. I could give reasons why. Given the fact that he was trying to build a sort of "son" ...you never think of your son as being a sexually together individual. A son is not thought of in terms of his sexual prowess.

FOOM: The same with your father and mother type thing...

SE: Yeah. So when he was building the Vision he was building somebody in a human body who would serve him, etc. I really doubt that even if he had the technology that he would have bothered to have fixed the Vision up. It wouldn't have been of any use to him. He had no inkling that anything else was going to happen. So, as far as I'm concerned, the Vision is non-functional in that area. We will say for the sake of Wanda that he is physically functional. Anyway, you may have a point. The Vision may care but, I think that it's part of the trip about wanting to become human but at the same time, I've considered, and this is just another idea... I always have a bunch of ideas floating around to choose from... that I'd use in the Wonder Man story. Quite probably in this story, with the possibility of his regaining his full humanity, there could be a very oblique discussion about is Wanda satisfied with the way things are and this and that. But I think that the reason I got them married in the first place is because they're real good for each other, just the characters as established. She's very understanding with a guy like him. She's level-headed, very warm, so on and so forth. She understands where he's at (A singles Bar in the Bronx...) and can not only live with it, but love it. And he digs her and I think they make a good couple and that's sort of where the whole overall thrust of the thing is now. There's no longer that will he or won't he? kind of trip because it became obvious after a while that he would. Now that they're married just the adjustments and there's still the big story that deals with what happens when they face the world for real. But basically, he's sort of like at Stage Two, having totally abandoned the pure concept of Mr. Spock. We're into the stage now where we see what happens when Mr. Spock gets married. He will be trying to adjust to it and the thing that I've already started to play with, and will be bringing to fruition here, is he brought her back from their honeymoon after a day and a half and said... well, okay... they were having fun and all, that we assume, but it's not such a big deal to him as it is to say, us. It's very logical to him that, okay, we've gone away and now let's get back and see what happens. And Wanda doesn't look at it like that and, being newlyweds, I didn't want to get them into a big argument, because newlyweds wouldn't get into this really big argument if they loved each other.



FOOM: But later on she'll think about it.

SE: Well, *he's* all ready thinking about it. Again, it's only been touched on since there's so much going on, but I have set it up where he's thinking, "Gee, everybody thinks it's strange that I came back after a day and a half. Maybe I'm not as human as I thought I was... there's a lot I still have to learn." He wants to be cool, and at the same time he doesn't have any experience at it so he's having to learn where it's at as he goes along.

FOOM: Are you going to open up their marriage in terms of Quicksilver and possibly even the Whizzer?

SE: Well, I understand Quicksilver is going into the Inhumans but I don't think it would be a big deal to get him back for a guest-star. I had been wanting to do it for a long time, and probably still will, something with Quicksilver. I want to have him come back and explain why he's a bigot, Present a sort of sympathetic ...explaining his viewpoint because everybody's viewpoint makes sense to them. I don't

like to do the same situation over and over again so I think I would have Quicksilver coming back and have him come to at least grudging terms with the situation as it exists. But of course he wouldn't come back and consent to be an Avenger or something like that. He'll still go over and be an Inhuman, or whatever he is, but something with Quicksilver eventually. Again, since I am going to be concentrating on the Vision and Wanda, and Yellowjacket and the Wasp as a sort of nucleus for the sequence beginning with Avengers 150, I would expect that there would be something there. What I also want to get into is Wanda and Jan becoming good friends as the wives of the group. Instead of the quadrangle thing with Mantis and the Swordsman breaking in and out between Wanda and the Vision, just two couples who like each other. Like Hank and Vision could hang out together and watch the football game and drink beer and whatever's happening. As far as the whole team, that's why I decided on the team as it is because I've got that nucleus of four and then the two old guard guys, Captain America and Iron Man, and then the Beast, who's sort of the perennial outsider.

FOOM: I wish the Beast would get some of his old dialogue back.

SE: Well, that was shot to hell by Roy and Gerry when they started the Beast strip. When I took it over he was all ready supposed to not talk like that. It was the first strip I ever wrote and they said, 'Here, don't write him like he used to be.' Okay, so what I came up with was that real crazy sort of continuous comedy monologue that he's into. And I liked it. So did everybody else, except maybe you.

FOOM: No, no. I like it. It's just that I think he should still have some of that left.

SE: Well he's smart. There's no question of that. He's not stupid at all which is what made him win out over Hawkeye because he could see the weirdness in it a lot more clearly. He's smart but he's just more laid back. He grew up and he went through the whole X-Men trip... I think there are people who, while in high school, are all intellectual or heavy in to something and as they grow up they start to say, 'Yeah, well. I can roll with the punches a little bit more, too.' I just don't think you're going to see much change in the Beast in that direction. I'm not going to make him stupid, but I like writing him as this crazy guy.

FOOM: Right. I was also going to mention where, in the last issue or so, he turned blue and you said he was mutating further. Is that just in terms of changing his color or did you have something else planned?

SE: No, that was an editorial decision. The book was not selling and everybody sat around wondering why it wasn't selling. They figured it was because the Beast didn't look impressive enough as this sort of motley gray. The gray, you know, comes out this sort of light purple anyway. That was just an art decision, basically... "We're making him blue... explain it, Steve!"

FOOM: But back to the Vision... Have you done any ideas or plotting for the Vision story in SPOTLIGHT?

SE: No, not really.

FOOM: So you haven't had any real thoughts on how the return of Wonder Man is going to affect the Vision?

SE: No. All I know is that Marv said he wanted him back and it sounded like a good thing to get into for the 150th anniversary issue. As to what's going to happen with him I don't really know. That's still two issues away as far as plotting goes. I do the stuff pretty much in sequence. I have ideas floating around as to what I'll do when I get there but basically I take it one book at a time. But the Vision, who's so secretive, is pretty unknown as a character so there's not that much known about him.

FOOM: I really wish you hadn't had him think.

SE: Oh yeah. That was an idea to try and open him up some and I agree with you and I don't plan to do that again. I did it for a reason, but upon further consideration I, as I said, agree with you.

FOOM: I think that pretty much anything you want to do with the Vision can be done without having him think.

SE: There is a problem with that, in that because he never thinks you never really know what he's doing inside which is okay with a Mr. Spock concept, but with a more developed person, after a time, you don't know where he's at. Which is why, in fact, in that Hellcat issue on the second page, we have him thinking, but not in terms of thought baloons just blurbs.

FOOM: That's the way it should be done.

SE: Right. I agree with you. So, we live and learn. It's really an organic think. Stan said that Spider-Man used to write itself and Len says that too. In some ways the books do and in others they don't. It's organic in that each issue is a step along the road. I'm sure not trying to tell you I've written THE AVENGERS perfectly.

FOOM: Like you said before concerning the writing on THE AVENGERS when you first started, it's difficult to write somebody else... it hampers you... but it must be much easier to say 'Well, now I've got the strip and I'm going to write me.'

SE: Well, I learned that. But I didn't know it from the start for sure and once I started approaching the Avengers as a sort of... well, as an analogy, Roy was writing the book as the television Avengers where I should have approached it as kind of the Waltons just because I started taking it from the characters point of view and that lead to the whole Mantis and quadrangle thing. That's when I started liking it as far as really being satisfied with what was happening. Trying to do it from somebody else's point of view... from Roy's point of view... that's just not where I'm at.

FOOM: When you were doing the Mantis-Swordsman thing, were you planning on doing anything with Mantis and the Vision?

SE: That started before while was finding my own style on the book. Mantis was originally supposed to be a femme fatale who was going to come in and sort of dump the Swordsman originally and start putting the moves on everybody. If you remember, when she first met the Avengers she kissed everybody. In fact, the Vision was going to be the object of her affectons. My original idea was to have the Vision swayed by her and would, in his interest of becoming human, find a second sexy woman who was definitely on his trail and he would be enough of a little boy in that sense to be flattered and even interested. But as I wrote the strip month to month I could never get it to the point where he could do that to Wanda. I tried making Wanda bitchy for a while but I could never convince myself that he would do it. It seemed logical as a concept to work towards but I could never get there because I could never make myself believe it. So it became more in everybody else's mind than a physical act.

FOOM: It seems to me that even though he is logical in as much a sense of the word as possible in his quest to become human he would at times go a bit overboard and mess up in some way or another.

SE: Yeah. That's what I'm getting into now. The trials and tribulations of an android who wants to be human. I want to keep him basically happy. I don't want to change it. Right now, I've got it so this'll be a happy marriage. He'll mess up but everything'll be all right. They're too much in love. He doesn't really know how to do what he wants to do, which is to become human, so he will make mistakes. I don't foresee any real heavy traumas where Wanda'll leave him or anything.

FOOM: There's a problem there with The Avengers being so much a part of their lives and separately they'd have to leave their whole lives in order to leave each other.

SE: Yeah. I couldn't see it in Reed Richards and Sue and I don't see it in Vision and Wanda either. They seem to be happy together. Perhaps Hank and Jan Pym, since he's so studious and she's so flighty, but not Wanda and Vision. They're very happy together. I really like to do characters and play them against each other.

FOOM: Okay, Steve, I guess that's about it for now. Thanx a bunch.

FOOM: What were the circumstances behind the creation of the Vision and why was he created?

RT: The Vision was created because, at certain periods, I was not allowed, because of editorial policy, to use Captain America, Thor and Iron Man as much as I wanted to. I had to, in fact, at various times, take them out of the Avengers against my will. Later I sneaked them back in. But at this particular time I wanted to create an Avenger that I could play around with... one that I had more or less invented and I wanted to bring back a new version of Jack Kirby's Vision character. I don't know if he wrote it or not in those days... he probably did. I wanted to use that character, or something like it, a guy from another dimension, only trapped in our dimension. Sort of an earth-bound Silver Surfer. And Stan, at the same time that I went over it with him, wanted an android character. He wanted the name Android Man or something like that. I could call him anything I wanted to... I would have called him Mandroid or whatever, Andro, or something like that. I didn't like the idea as such, but finally, since I really wanted to get the Vision I talked Stan into having the Vision but as an android instead of being a guy from another dimension. And everything went pretty well. The only thing I had done was to have his face made red because we didn't want to have any more blue or green people... we had a lot of those, so I made the face red. Stan always thought it looked too humorous, but to date nobody's ever said it looked humorous. Another thing I did... most central characters always have a chest symbol so I put the diamond on.

FOOM: Actually, the chest symbol is so insignificant that he could have almost gone without it.

RT: Yeah. But I didn't want him to because I think it focuses attention on him. I think it makes a better character, visually, then he would have been without it. Otherwise you've just got a green chest. You're right. It wasn't terribly important. I just liked it so I put it on there. And the jewel on the head. Of course the character's quite different from what I had originally planned, but that was the main inspiration... getting a new Avenger that I could play with. He was very popular from the beginning and I had a lot of fun with him. I remember that the second issue he appeared in, which told his origin backwards... you know, each flashback taking place before the one earlier in the book, was one of the best selling AVENGERS ever...It was called "Even an Android Can Cry"...(probably because it had all these characters charging at the reader on the cover.) I know that was during a period when the AVENGERS were doing very, very well and it created a lot of enthusiasm at the time and the Vision became a popular character immediately. Especially with his on-again off-again romance with the Scarlet Witch and so forth.

FOOM: When you first came up with the Vision did you plan the whole thing with the original Human Torch?

RT: No, actually that was Neal Adams' idea. Neal, when we did that one giant-size book together, stuck this one panel in there of the Ant-Man seeing something in the Vision's chest that somehow gave him the idea that he was the Human Torch. It's kind of ridiculous in a way. I just left it in as a kind of subtle bit because I felt one panel in the middle... and it could have been interpreted in 3000 ways... It was unfortunately leaked to the fan press and even a letter in a letters page after I had stopped doing the book was printed that mentioned the fact.

FOOM: It was my letter. (Laughter.)

RT: Was it? It shouldn't have been printed ...it's not your fault, tho. That gave it away to a few people. It was even mentioned in an article in Gallery or something. It was an idea of Neal's and I've never been terribly wild about the idea but I had decided to use it simply because it gave him a little bit of pedigree. It wasn't a terribly important idea...

Roy Thom Speaks

Part 2-

"Journey to

FOOM: Steve certainly used it to the hilt.
RT: Yeah. He did.
FOOM: I think I once heard you say that Kirby designed the character.
RT: No. But he was based partially on the early Kirby character. But no, Kirby had nothing to do with it.
FOOM: John Buscema came up with the design?
RT: Well, basically, I explained to John what I wanted and sent him a picture of Kirby's Vision...one of the early issues where he looked very grim...and I said I wanted that but I wanted kind of a helmet feeling. And I think I probably drew a picture of the head and mentioned the jewel and mentioned the diamond on the chest and so forth. John came up with it and we changed it between the first and second book only in how the cape fastened in the front. But it was basically a combination of sort of Kirby's and mine and Buscema's.
FOOM: When you were doing the Vision the book was selling so well. Did you ever think of spinning him off and trying him elsewhere?
RT: Yeah. I deliberately wanted not to suggest that... I think one time I might have in a moment of weakness, but basically I never really wanted to because I liked him. Y'know, he became an android adrift in a world where all the characters are misfits. It seemed to me the idea of android running around that people might distrust would be not too different from all the other misfit heroes. I thought that in the context of a group he works better. It was a combination of the fact that I don't think Stan ever really realized how popular the character was and, since the name the Vision is not a strong name in and of itself, was not that strong because it doesn't suggest strength. I never really wanted to spin him off and we may have discussed it once and Stan didn't want to and I, if I ever brought it up and all, let it drop immediately because I really didn't care too much for the idea. I didn't mind an occasional guest shot somewhere else or a team-up but if it were left to me I'd just as soon not do a Vision book.
FOOM: Well, we're doing one now in MARVEL SPOTLIGHT.
RT: Well, that kind of thing makes sense to me and I don't begrudge anyone for it. It's now quite a different character. For example, I don't know if I would ever have had the Vision and Scarlet Witch get married. There are other things, like showing the Vision without part of his costume on... I just would never have done it. He just doesn't look that good and it takes away from the grim dramatic quality of it to make him look like that. It's a nice realistic touch but I don't think that realism in and of itself is always a good idea. I respect the fact that Steve has made the book sell quite well since he's taken it over but I don't always agree with what he does in it.
FOOM: When you created him did you think he could conceive?
RT: Oh yeah. I always had in mind that, not long after he was created, the Vision was like the red androids in Robert Silverberg's TOWER OF GLASS. They too had a kind of sex life. But as far as conception I'm not quite sure what I had in mind when he was first created. I always assumed that he was complete but as far as having a child, I don't know. Can he now?
FOOM: No. Steve said no.
RT: I think I probably would have assumed no.
FOOM: I was thinking along the lines of Ultron-5's having used Hank Pym or Jarvis as a donor.
RT: Jarvis, I think, would have been kind of ridiculous because, though I think there is nothing repulsive about old age, I think it's an inherent turn-off to kids.
FOOM: Hokay, Roy, I guess that's it.

DEPARTMENT OF

INFOMATION

ANNUAL NEWS: Nope, this isn't the only news you're going to get all year. That little sub-title is just our way of telling you that starting in '76 we're gonna be giving you 15 (count 'em—15) big annuals of all your favorite Mighty Marvel heroes. That's right, Kemo Sabes, 15 book-length magazines featuring 35 pages of story... and all for a mere four bits (that's 50¢!)! Starting off these giant sized extravaganzas is IRON MAN, followed by (have you got your pencils handy? It's a loong list!) the FANTASTIC FOUR, LUKE CAGE—POWER MAN, CONAN, THE INCREDIBLE HULK, THE AVENGERS, CAPTAIN AMERICA, MARVEL TEAM-UP, DR. STRANGE, DAREDEVIL, THE DEFENDERS, MASTER OF KUNG FU, THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, THOR, and MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE. Whew! We suggest you start saving your pennies *today* 'cause you're not gonna want to miss even one of these incredible annuals.

BARBARIAN NEWS: By Crom! There's a lot going on in the Barbarian scene, too. Like what? you ask. Like the 50 page Conan opus in THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN that we've been promising you for so long, for one! It's called "The Abode of the Damned" and it's by the unbeatable team of Roy Thomas, John Buscema and Yong Montano. And, speaking of our friendly neighborhood sword slinger (hmmm?), there's action aplenty to be seen in his own book, too. Issues 60 through 63 continue the story of Conan (and, incidentally, how he became known throughout the Hyperborian Age as Amra, the Lion (Well, sort of...)) and Belit, the She Pirate. These, of course, are by the same folks who bring you Conan every month; Thomas, Buscema, and Gan. As if that weren't enough, we have coming up in SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #11 a story about another Robert E. Howard creation, Solomon Kane, this by Doug Moench and Conan inker Steve Gan. Plus, still in the works, yet another Solomon Kane tale by Moench and Mike Zeck. And (who says this isn't the Marvel Age of Bombastic Barbarians?) the long-awaited Bran Mak Morn masterpiece by none other than Roy Thomas, Barry Smith, and Tim Conrad. (Oh yeah. We almost forgot Red Sonja and we wouldn't wanna do that and get her angry. She's still in every ish of MARVEL PRESENTS by Bruce Jones and Frank Thorne.) Also, look for an adaptation of R.E.H.'s only interplanetary novel, ALMURIC by Roy in the near future! So, if you've got any evil wizards laying around the house you'd better get 'em out of sight 'cause the Mighty Marvel barbarian folks are on the way!

WORLD WAR TWO NEWS: You remember World War II don'tcha? It was in all the papers! Okay, old jokes aside, heres the info on Marvel's books that are set in the period of WWII: In MARVEL PREMIERE #28, keep a sharp look out for the newest super-hero group from the House of Ideas, the Liberty Legion, starring a whole bunch of Golden Age Marvel heroes like Blue Diamond, Miss America, the Whizzer, Red Raven, Patriot, Jack Frost, the Thin Man and whoever else is flying by when author Roy Thomas needs 'em. Don Heck and Vince Colletta are the artists. Now get ready for this and keep your score cards handy 'cause the story from MARVEL PREMIERE is continued in the sixth shining issue of THE INVADERS where the two groups clash, and then it's back again in MARVEL PREMIERE #30 and maybe their own title! And, on the same train of thought (and here're where the score cards *really* come in handy!) this year's FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL (you remember that from a few paragraphs back, don'tcha?) takes the FF back to WWII where thy fight side-by-side with the Invaders, and, following that, the Thing teams up with the Liberty Legion a few months later in MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE. Now how's *that* for easy-to-follow continuity? (Huh?)

AND SPEAKING OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR IN THE "SPEAKING OF WORLD WAR TWO" DEPARTMENT: The FF get a new team member to replace Ben Grimm in ish #169. And he's none other than Luke Cage, Power Man. However, the partnership doesn't last long as you'll see from the surprise ending of that ish and the FF versus Power Man in #170.

MARVEL SPOTLIGHT NEWS PART II: Steve Englehart has some mind-blowing team-ups forthcoming in Spotlight, as well as one or two solo appearances that'll knock you off your pins. This issue of FOOM's star, the Vision, is slated for an adventure that is guaranteed to be unlike any you've ever read. Steve won't tell us exactly what it'll be but he promises to make it good! Yellowjacket is also scheduled for an appearance that'll be slightly offbeat, as will the team-ups of Hawkeye and the Two Gun Kid, and Moondragon and Hellcat... Avengers All!

NEW PEOPLE NEWS: Whew! Have we got a whole lotta new additions to the Marvel Universe! To begin with, there's gonna be a new addition to the Guardians of the Galaxy... and we can't tell you who this person is yet but we can tell you it's gonna be different. You may remember a character from a few years back who went by the name of the Red Guardian. In case you're wondering why we brought the subject up, it's because we want you to keep an eye out for the return of said person in THE DEFENDERS. We know you'll find it a pleasant surprise. You may also re-

call a character from WEREWOLF BY NIGHT named Moon Knight? We hope so, 'cause he'll soon be appearing in the pages of MARVEL PREMIERE, as will a whole new character called Wood God by Bill Mantlo and Keith Giffen.

THE TOGETHER AGAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME, OR TREMENDOUS TEAM-UP TO THRILL YOU, NEWS: Spider-Man is gonna get together with a whole trunk load of folks in the pages of MARVEL TEAM-UP. The ones to look for are Moon Dragon, Killraven (we dare you... nay, double dare you to figure out how he'll manage that little trick!), Deathlok and the Thing. After that last one, Spidey'll cross over into MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE to appear with the Thing. And how's that for being neighborly? The Thing, in the mean time, will appear with a few other folks on his own in Two-In-One. The first one coming up is Morbius in a story by Bill Mantlo and Arv Jones, followed by the Scarecrow by Mantlo and Ron Wilson, and Tigra, the Were-Woman by Tony Isabella and Ron Wilson.

THE WIZARD OF OZ AND THE MUNCHKIN NEWS: The second issue of the Wizard of Oz Treasury Edition will feature Roy Thomas' adaptation of L. Frank Baum's third wondrous Oz tale, "Ozma of Oz." If you like Munchkins, you'll love this.

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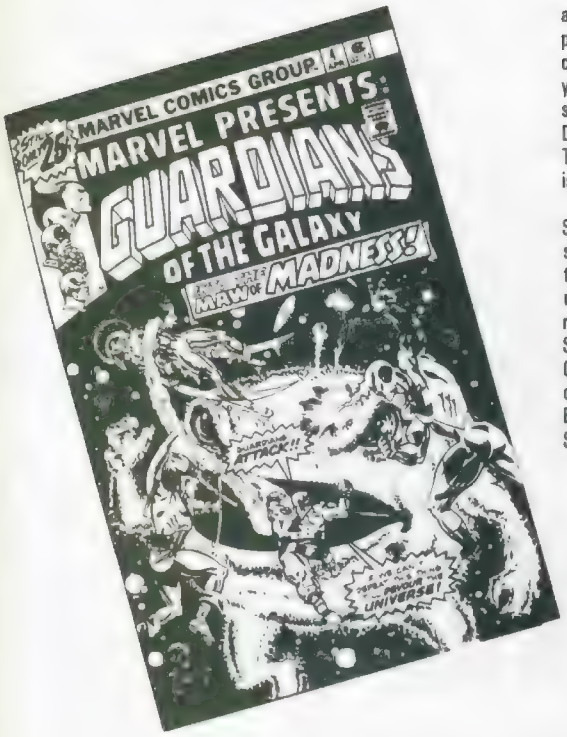
EVEN WITH THE BLACK KNIGHT BESIDE YOU SKULL YOU BATTLE IN VAIN!
NOTHING THAT YOU'VE EVER DREAMED OF COULD PREPARE YOU FOR THE TERROR OF SLAUGHTOUS!

SECRETS THAT WE'LL GIVE YOU A FEW HINTS ABOUT DEPARTMENT: Did ya ever think that we could make the mysterious Watcher even bigger and better than before? Well, no matter what your answer is, check these pages in upcoming issues and see what we're talking about. 'Nuff said.

CLASSICAL LITERATURE AND MARVEL NEWS: Who among you out there has not heard of Rudyard Kipling? You all know that he was one of the greatest writers of jungle tales that ever was, and his most famous stories are those of Mowgli, the jungle boy. That's all we're gonna say for now except for Roy Thomas and Gil Kane. Figure out the rest for yourselves.

SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP NEWS: Steve Englehart takes over as scripter on SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP and intends to give the book a whole new direction. Dr. Doom finally forces Namor to join up with him in his schemes for world conquest (well, we never said Doc Doom was a very nice person, y'know!). Don't be surprised to see the Fantastic Four and a few other surprises in this issue, or the



following one, like, fer instance, a new off-beat hero called the Shroud, or a certain Secretary of State with the initials H.K. who we'd prefer not to name, poppin' up.

KARATE, JIU-JITSU, KUNG-FU AND OTHER MARTIAL ARTS NEWS: Bill Mantlo, Keith Giffen and Rico Rival bring you the continuing adventures of Sons of the Tiger in DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG-FU. The White Tiger (and wait until you get a load of this guy) is the star of this story as he goes after two fellas named BlackByrd and the Jack of Hearts.

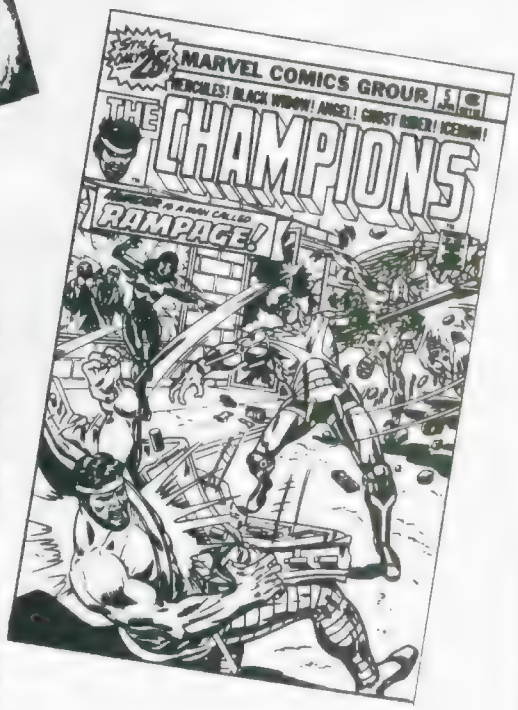
CYBORG NEWS: There're surprises galore as startling changes take place in Deathlok. For one, Deathlok is no longer Luther Manning, 'cause Luther is back as himself working for the CIA while Deathlok, who no longer has to worry about Major Ryker, battles against practically everybody. (We never said it wasn't complicated, friends!) For a fuller explanation since, frankly, we aren't quite sure what's going on ourselves, check out the Rich Buckler/Klaus Janson presentation of Deathlok.

AVENGERS NEWS: Steve Englehart tells us that there's changes aplenty scheduled in THE AVENGERS. The major change is gonna be in the basic structure of the team itself. Steve's whittled the over a dozen members down to seven; the Beast, Iron Man, Mr. and Mrs. Vision(?), Captain America, Yellowjacket and the Wasp. You can rest assured, however, that the rest of the Avengers aren't gone for good. They'll be there whenever needed by the group. Meanwhile, to make sure they all stay in top fightin' form, the other members will be appearing all over the place in team-ups or in individual stories of their own. The new team is chosen in Avengers #149 and #150 sees the return of (ta-da!) Wonder Man, back after an absence of many moons.

CAPTAIN MARVEL, RICK JONES, SUPREME INTELLIGENCE AND THE REST OF THE KNOWN COSMOS NEWS: Coming up in Captain Marvel is a five part story that involves Mar-Vell, Rick, the Supreme Intelligence, the ends of the Universe, the mysterious Millenia Bloom, more of the little lady named Fawn.

and just about everything else you can think of, with the possible expection of the kitchen sink... although you can never tell with Steve Englehart! We're dying to tell you how this whole story's gonna turn out but we've been sworn to secrecy by Steve and Al Milgrom. By the by, the Destroyer's gonna be tanglin' with Cap in his search for Thanos. That alone oughta be worth the price of the issue!

SORCERER SUPREME NEWS: Starting with the 13th senses-shattering issue (that's the last part of the End of the World Saga) DOCTOR STRANGE goes monthly! That's right, magicks-freaks, you're gonna be getting twice as much of the ol' mystical master of magic than before! Steve Englehart's still gonna do the scripting, with Gene Colan on the art except (and are you sitting down for this one?) for a three-part fill-in involving the gods of ancient Egypt drawn by Frank Brunner. The 14th issue has Doc Strange meeting DRACULA, Lord of Vampires.



DAREDEVIL: DD #132 features the second part of the bombastic BULLSEYE story that started last month. Not only that, but a strange mystery begins to form about Heather's father, and there's even gonna be some new dramatic developments involving Foggy's fiance, Deborah Harris. And, while we're at it, we might as well clue you in to the fact that mild-mannered Matt Murdock is gonna find himself in a real earth-shaking pickle—and we don't mean DILL. Anyhoo, with incredible inking by Santa Klaus Janson over Urbane Bob Brown's power-packed pencils, we kinda think it'll be worth a look. (translation: Don't miss it!)

Ms. MARVEL: The biggest MS-tery around the ol' Marvel Bullpen this month is a gal who goes by the numinous name of Ms. Marvel. And, no, it's not Stan's niece. Ms. Marvel is the name of a bombastic new character due to be headin' your way in the coming months. That's really all we can say right now (we told you it was a *MS-TERY*, didn't we?) except to warn you that if you miss this one, Marvelite, it's your fault, not ours.

RETURN OF THE GODS: One picture's worth 1,000 words (Well, at least a couple dozen, anyhoo!) so just take a gander or three at this astonishing gent (on page 24) and re-

member that he's gonna be featured in Jolly Jack Kirby's newest and most senses-shattering project, RETURN OF THE GODS! His name? Ikaris! 'Nuff said!

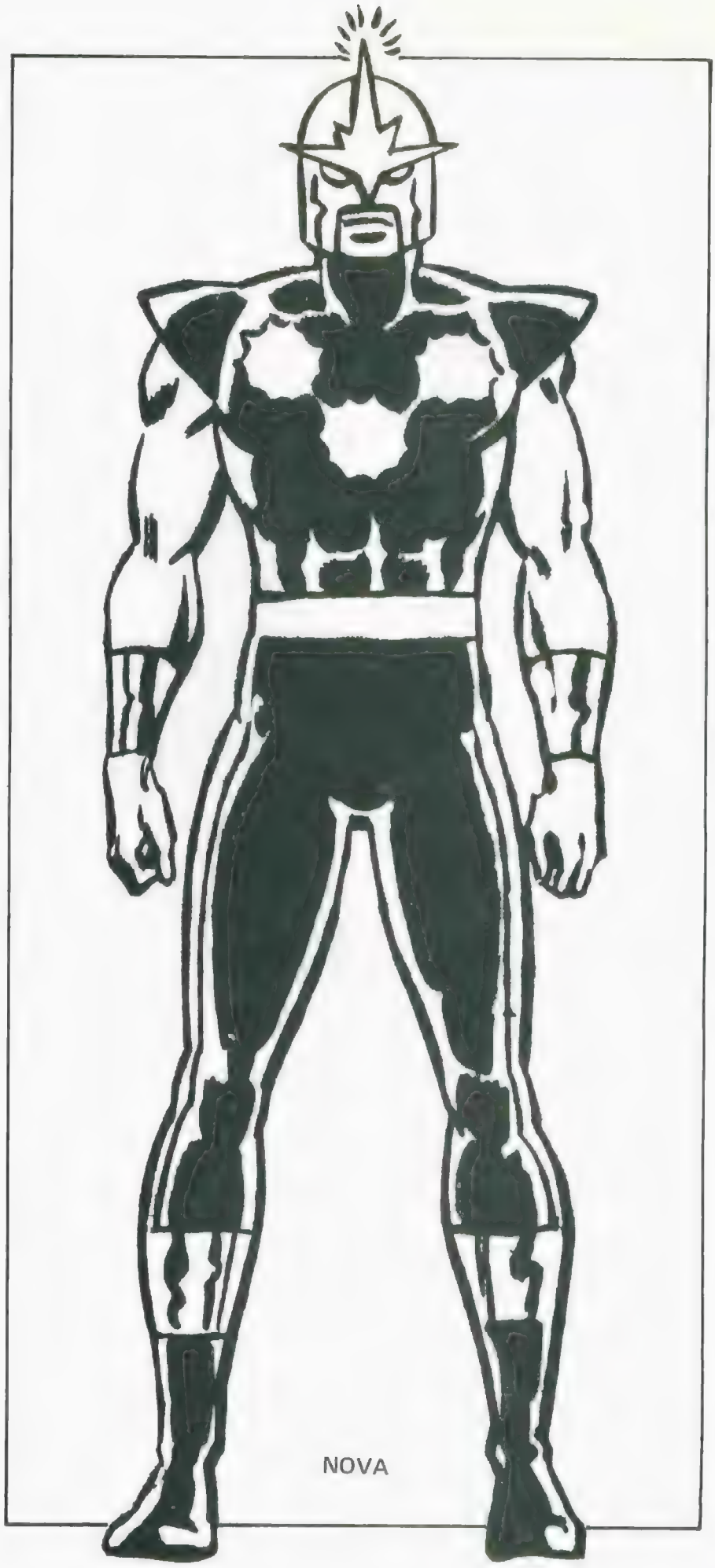
NOVA: Stop the presses! The most fantastic news since Spider-Man made his dramatic debut almost 15 years ago is Marvel's newest costumed adventurer, the man called Nova. When you think about it for a moment, you'll be shocked to discover that Nova is the first new superhero to come along in years who's *not* associated with some trend. The idea with Nova is to bring our rabid readers an entirely new, old-fashioned superhero. (Whaa—?) In other words, true believer, to create a superhero something like Spider-Man and fit it to the swinging 70's. Nova's a teen-ager who lives with his mother, father, and younger brother, he's an average high-school sophomore named Richard Rider who just *happens* to acquire amazing super powers. Nova is a return to the simplicity of the early days of Marvel, only modernized. What sort of powers does Nova have? When we asked Marvelous Marv Wolfman, (he's writing the book) he said, "Nova can fly under his own power, has super strength, can tune in on any radio signal anywhere in the world, and can tell time. He can also tie his shoe-laces which is quite a trick considering the fact that he doesn't even have any!" Big John Buscema is drawing this character who could turn out to be the biggest news of 1976! Really!

MONTHLY NEWS! All right! you win! You've been asking —no, demanding—that some of your favorite torrid titles go monthly, and that's exactly what ol' Marvel's gonna give ya. Effective in March, the peerless POWERMAN, DR. STRANGE (that Master of Mystic Arts), MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE, and those marvelous Marvel Tales will all become monthly titles! Who says Marvel doesn't listen when its fans clamor. (But when they *groan*, then we gotta worry 'bout 'em!)

TREASURY EDITIONS: Everyone's asking about our titanic Treasury Editions—What characters will be featured and when? Well, the issue on sale in March boasts the best and most sought-after stories featuring two or more of Marvel's magnificent heroes. The Marvel Team-Up Treasury Edition is a bargain at any price, so buy 2 and give one to whoever *you* happen to be teamed-up with at the moment. After Team-Up, the Treasury Editions will feature the Mighty Thor, then the world's greatest comic heroes, the Fantastic Four! How's that for one incredible line-up, o faithful ones?

X-MEN: In case you've been vacationing on the dark side of the moon for the past few weeks, you've probably noticed that the X-Men are approaching their 100th issue. If you think that calls for a celebration—well, so do Cheerful Chris Claremont, Delightful Dave Cockrum, and Snappy Sam Grainger who just happen to write, draw, and ink our x-citing mutants. So, to celebrate, they've cooked up a real blockbuster of a yarn featuring some of the X-men's oldest and most popular baddies, including the sensational Sentinels. The story begins in #98 and culminates in issue #100, so be sure to be here from the beginning. And, incidentally, according to Chris, "The X-men face the only foes they can never hope to defeat!" Now, there's both a riddle and a shocker rolled up in one for you. ...And as if that weren't enough, we've got some *more* X-men news, but this stuff is strictly confidential—so don't let it get around, y'hear? After the X-men finish their bout with the Sentinels, the following things happen (But not necessarily in this order): 1) There'll be a 2-part story set in the blissful land of blarney. The Banshee inherits an Irish castle and the X-men ...well, see for yourself. 2) More info on the mystery of Eric the Red, Havok, and Polaris, 3) Origins of the NEW X-men, 4) Professor Xavier goes mad, and 5) More sub-plots than you can shake a (fill in your own word) at.

TOMB OF DRACULA: Dracula is all set to battle a crazy character called the Night-Staker. The terrific trio of Marv Wolfman, Gene Colan, and Tom Palmer brings you this as

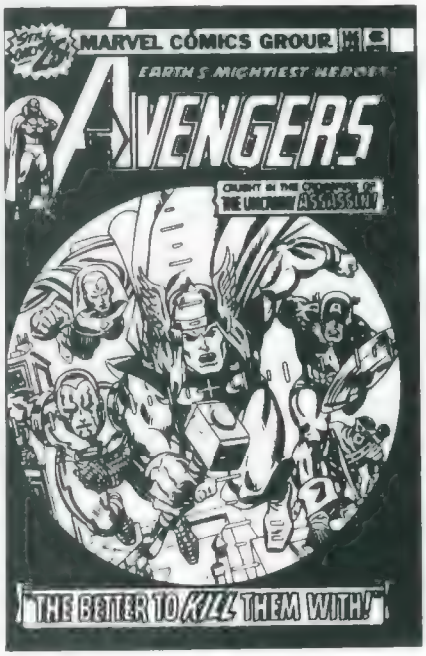


well as the first half of a two-part story in which Count Dracula meets that master of mysticism, Dr. Strange. This tale will be concluded in the good doctor's own mag, natch!

IRON FIST: In issue #5, there's a dramatic and destructive battle to the death when Iron Fist meets the sensational Scimitar. Issue's #6-7 finish off the rescue of little Miss Colleen Wing, and in ish #8, Iron Fist stops his nutty globe-trotting and returns from London and the Mid-East to good ol' New York.

IRON MAN: Iron Man afficionadoes will want to be sure to watch for some new modifications in our hero's awesome armor. It seems like every time we turn around, ol' shell-head is staging an iron-plated fashion show, but these newest designs, we've gotta admit, are gonna knock your eyes out! All this thanks to the tremendous talents of Len Wein and Happy Herb Trimpe.

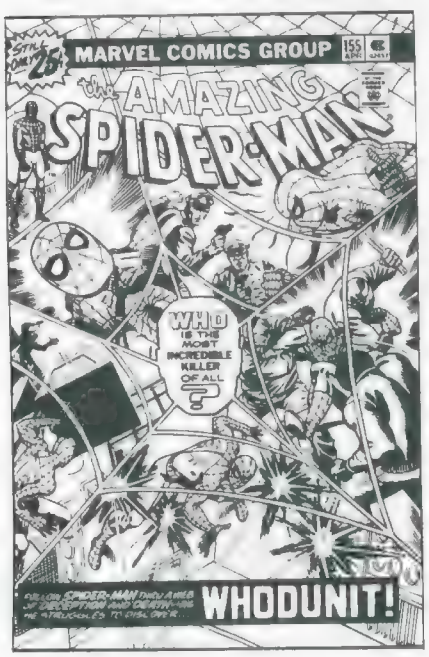
SON OF SATAN: All Hell's gonna break loose (literally) when the Possessor invades Satan's dark domain and usurps the throne of hell. This cataclysmic climax wraps up the "homecoming" trilogy in ish #3 of the title. But there's more. Much, much more. Ish #3 begins minor rumblings of change which, by issue #4, will have concluded a drastic revisal of the already-fantastic strip's entire concept! Now, Son of Satan's gonna be more exciting and scary than ever! To begin with, from then on, Craig Russell will be handling the lay-out of the mag, but—even more—he'll be discussing new, bold visual concepts with Satan scripter John Warner. Sonny Trinidad will be finishing Craig's layouts, so there shouldn't be any doubt that Son of Satan's gonna be one of the best-drawn titles in Marvel's magnificent line-up. Starting with issue #4, Son of Satan gets a new location—Washington, D.C. Actually, he'll be in Georgetown, a small community in Washington, which just happened to serve as the setting for that million-dollar movie marvel, "The Exorcist." There'll be a new emphasis on Dandy Daimon Hellstrom, who'll be altering his profession slightly. He'll still be an exorcist (actually, a free-lance exorcist) but he'll also be taking on a new job that while allowing him mobility, will also give him a good, solid home-base. Not only that, but Son of Satan gets a whole new supporting cast including (among the weirdest members) Sarifa Thames, an albino witch who is a professor of nature occult, and Proffet, the celestial

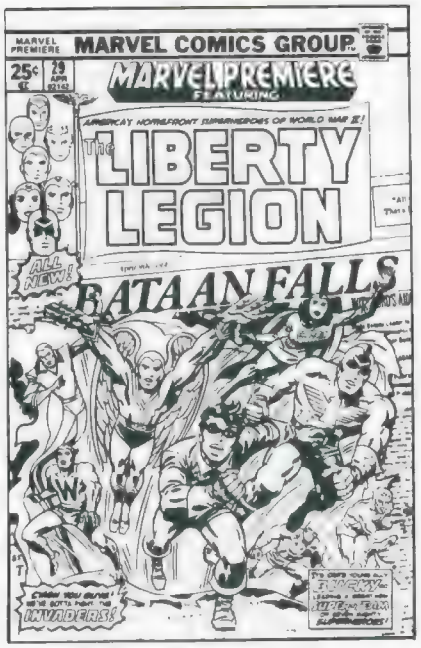


fool. Proffet looks to be the most bizarre character in an era of bizarre characters, so if you miss this one, don't say we didn't warn you!

SPIDER-MAN: Everyone's favorite web-slinger is gonna be a wedding guest when Ned Leeds and Betty Bryant finally tie the know in issue #156. In that same story, we've got a glitzy new villain for you called the Mirage! The next issue's called "The Ghost that Haunted Octopus" and the Octopus referred to in that terrific title is none other than Spidey's old nemesis, Doc Ock. Harry Osborne fans will be interested to know that he's getting together with—you'll never guess—Lovely Liz Allen! And wait 'till you get a look at JJJ's new secretary! The script's by Lively Len Wein with art by Rapturous Ross Andru and inking by Mighty Mike Esposito.

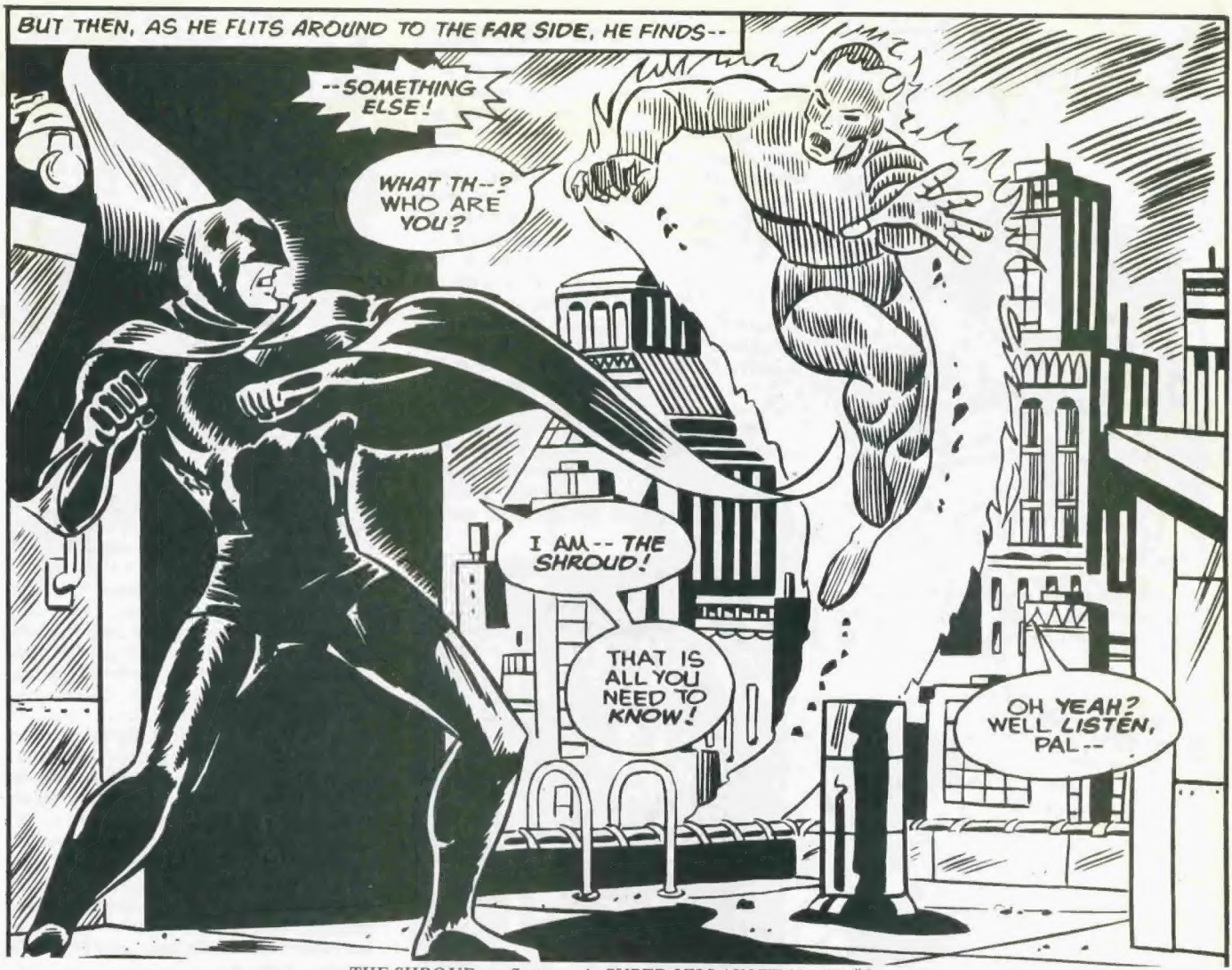
HULK: The tremendous team of Len Wein, Sal Buscema, and Joe Staton bring you a special anniversary story for issue #200. It's called "Intruder in the Mind" and it guest-stars practically every swingin' super-villain the Incredible Hulk has ever tangled with! And then, before things can settle down, ol' green Skin enters a micro-world to tackle a micro-version of Conan, the Barbarian.





THOR: You won't want to miss issues #246-7 when goldilocks faces the menace of Firelord. Then it's off to Asgard where Thor and his buddies stage a revolution against Big Daddy Odin, himself! Len Wein, John Buscema, and Joe Sinnott bring you this mind-blaster in the magnificent Marvel manner.

KILLRAVEN: Beginning with issue #35, Killraven returns to his old War of the Worlds cover logo. Dauntless Don McGregor has written a story for that issue called "The 24-Hour Man" which introduces two new characters who are bound to have all Marveldom talking about them for ages: Emmanuel and G'raph. Set in Atlanta, Georgia, it's one of the most darkly bizarre romance stories you've ever read—in it Killraven finally begins to reveal a bit about his puzzlin' past and why he is the focal point in an intergalactic war. In future earth-shakin' issues, we finally discover what Killraven hopes to accomplish by his cross-country trek besides finding his brother, Deathraven. Sabre returns with a new costume designed by Craig Russell (whose layouts in the stories will be finished by Kinky Keith Giffin and inked by Jumpin' Jack Abel), and keep an eye out for a Sabre feature in one of our swingin' spotlight books. Mourning Prey, an unusual


BUT THEN, AS HE FLITS AROUND TO THE FAR SIDE, HE FINDS--
--SOMETHING ELSE!
WHAT TH--? WHO ARE YOU?
I AM-- THE SHROUD!
THAT IS ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW!
OH YEAH? WELL LISTEN, PAL--

THE SHROUD, as first seen in SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP #6.

new character, is introduced in a story called "The Morning After Mourning Prey," and our hero finds himself in a very famous amusement park in Florida (we hope that doesn't take the Mickey out of the surprise). For those of you who've wondered if War of the Worlds will ever go to Mars, it will. And for Duffy Vohland et al, Mint Julip *will* return. A final obscure note: A story is slated about Old Skull that traces his origin from 1987-2019, and will at long last reveal what happened to Killraven and Old Skull in Madison Square Garden (mentioned back in Amazing Adventures #26!)

JUNGLE ACTION: "They Told Me a Myth I Wanted to Believe!" is the title of Black Panther's latest swingin' story (#20) in which there are five pages of pin-up type illustrations of the Panther locked in battle with the Klan! A new supportin' cast including one Kevin Trublood, sheriff Roderick Tate, and Monica's parents are comin' you way, too. Then, in ish #21, the Panther invades a Klan rally and is burned on the cross. There'll be *one* version of Monica's Sister's death in the story by Don McGregor with illustrations by Wild Billy Graham and inking by Bob McLeod. The July '76 Bicentennial story is set in the reconstruction period following the Civil War—but it's not a time-travel story! Now go figure that one out. And look forward to 'Wind Eagle, they used his desire for freedom to imprison him!"

LUKE CAGE: Issue #30 is a little thriller called "Over the Years They Murdered the Stars" wherein we discover if Don McGregor can save Luke and all of Manhattan from a 3-way death trap. You'll see the long awaited completion of the Piranna Jones/Cockroach Hamilton trilogy. And there's even some earth-shakin' info about Quentin Chase and his persistant pursuit of Luke Cage. But that's all just a warm-up for ish #31—drawn by Friendly Frank Robbins—which is sure to be one of the most devastating Luke Cage stories ever told. It's called "The Fire this Time" and features the fire-bombing of a black family's home in Jamaica, Queens! It's a shocker!

EXTRA: More surprises! Lively Len Wein and Urbane Bob Brown (doing his first work for Marvel as both penciller and inker of a strip) are joining forces to bring you an as-yet-unnamed super-group of four new heroes led by Destiny, that old villain from Sub-mariner #1. The group is composed of lost souls—adventurers who have lost their reasons for living. Destiny provides reasons for them...to die!

THE SAVAGE SWORD of CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
ALL NEW ACTION!
A FULL-LENGTH CONAN THRILLER! ABODE OF THE DAMNED!
PLANET OF THE APES
THE MAGAZINE THAT DARES TO BE DUMB
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